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Oct 20, 1952

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Military Application, AEC, Washington, D.C.

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STUDY OF OPERATIONAL FUTURE - NEVADA PROVING GROUNDS

SYMBOL: T-7

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Reference is made to Teletype Message C-162 of September 24 from your office relative to radiological matters and suggesting a study be made of the operational future of Nevada Proving Grounds.

The Nevada Proving Grounds was established as a test site for atomic devices and weapons only after careful deliberation. Certain unanticipated effects and results, and the magnitude of other effect and results, as demonstrated by our recent tests, now indicate that a thorough re-evaluation of our situation be made. In accordance with your suggestion, I propose to establish a group to make intensive study of the problems involved and recommendations as to the possible solutions of these problems. This study will embrace not only known problems, but those which we can anticipate as the character of devices to be tested are changed.

In view of the magnitude of the problems, and the effect the findings of this group will have on future continental tests, the study group should include representatives of our major research contractors, which are the primary potential users of the proving grounds. Accordingly, representatives of LASL and UCRL will be included. The proposed membership will be:

- Completed*
- 1 SFOO representative, as chairman (probably R. E. Cole)
 - 1 DMA representative (preferably some one familiar with test requirements, both present and projected)
 - 1 Division of Biology and Medicine representative (possibly Dr. Bugher)
 - 2 LASL representatives (1 - Scientific; 1 - Health)
 - 1 UCRL representative (Scientific)
 - 1 Division of Information Service representative
- Amper*
- Scheduling*

The scientific representatives of LASL and UCRL should be people who have a broad knowledge of the research program and are able to prognosticate long-range test requirements and the problems with which we will probably be faced in the future.

DOE ARCHIVES

Some of the factors which will be considered in the study are:

- a. Have the requirements and reasons for establishing the continental test site changed since its establishment?
- b. What types of devices do we expect to test?
- c. Will future devices which will be tested at NPG create new problems? Increase the magnitude of present problem? Will decision as to type and size of test devices be governed by limiting site conditions? If so, what are the limiting conditions?
- d. What are the existing problems? (Under this factor the following should be covered: Contamination in the test area; radiation hazard to general public; claims arising from physical damage and radioactivity, and public attitude to continental tests.)
- e. What steps can we take to eliminate or minimize existing and anticipated health and public relation problems?
- f. What steps can we take to minimize contamination, both in the immediate test area and off-site?
- g. What steps can we take to improve decontamination procedures?
- h. Will limitations at NPG dictate its abandonment in favor of a more suitable site, in the foreseeable future?

The group will probably require experimental testing of procedures to minimize contamination. Therefore, to permit inclusion of such testing in Upshot/Knothole, and to permit final decision on the operational future of Nevada Proving Grounds at an early date, I intend that the group be activated as soon as possible, with an interim report to include recommendations as to methods of alleviating contamination problems to be submitted prior to March 1, 1952.

Your assistance in presenting this plan to DBM and DIS and in selecting the individuals to serve as DMA, DBM And DIS representatives will be appreciated. With your concurrence, I will contact directly Dr. Lang, of UCRL, with regard to their representative. Any suggestions or comments you may care to make with regard to the general scope of this study will also be appreciated.